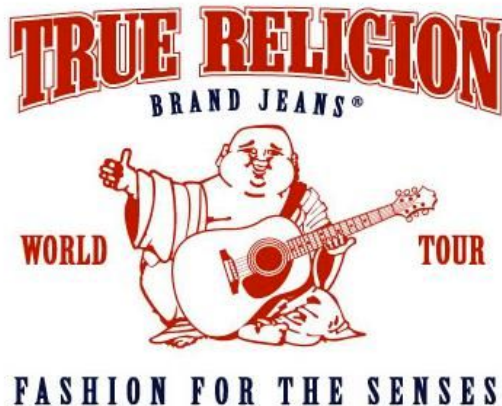


WHAT IS TRUE RELIGION?

Collect Trinity 6

Lord of all power and might, author and giver of all good things, graft into our hearts the love of Your name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of Your great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



The past week's heat wave has been hard on many people. Not everyone has air conditioning. So where do you go? Even if you have air conditioning you probably don't want to stay in your house or office all day. Ordinarily, I dislike Shopping Malls but desperate times call for desperate measures. Perhaps you joined me in seeking refuge at the Eaton's centre or Yorkdale

Shopping Malls.

One of the retailer's signs always grabs my attention. It's big and blue, "TRUE RELIGION". They are a clothing retailer selling high end designer jeans. I had to find out more. What is "True Religion" anyways? The term is in this week's collect. Was the founder of this business familiar with the collect for the 6th Sunday after Trinity? Or was the founder used to singing "Get me that Old Time Religion" from the Southern US Bible Belt? Did he share similar values of "Chick Fillet?" I had to find out.

A closer look inside the store at the label on the jeans preaches the founder's, Jeffrey Lubell's message. I put a copy in the bulletin for reference. But just to make sure I was on the right track I found a web site where the logo is explained.

Jeffrey Lubell chose a smiling Buddha who represents his spiritual side and it is a symbol of peace, nature, happiness and good fortune; and the acoustic guitar for his classic guitar roots and his love for groups like Jethro Tull, Joni Mitchell, James Taylor, etc. "World Tour" shows that it is a global brand.

Jeffrey Lubell is part of the celebrity world, many of whom, have embraced a popular form of Buddhism. Now I didn't review the great Sanskrit classics of the religion to understand it, but instead, to understand celebrity Buddhism, the smiling Buddah, I opted to watch Oprah Windfry's 3 minute video on the subject. She has quite a following on u-tube for her "Super Soul Sunday Series" .Along with a wonderful collage of peace inducing pictures and music was the central message given by a professor on the subject from the University of Southern California....

Buddism, the 4th largest world religion is different from other world religions in that it is not orientated towards God but towards Humanity. Human Beings are responsible for their own suffering and the path out of suffering resides with us.

Really, God has little to do with the religion and oddly enough, it has little to do with our fellow man. The focus is on humanity's innate ability to meditate and attain enlightenment. But how can fallen man, sinful man, with limited body, mind and soul accomplish such things? Is it reasonable to believe that with such enlightenment comes the strength to follow the eightfold noble

path of right understanding, intention, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness and concentration? Yet, is this mere eight-fold path possibly as deep and pure as our infinite and holy God? They admit that it takes most people countless cycles of death and rebirth to higher forms of humanity before entering Nirvana. It isn't heaven as we understand it but more like nothingness. I find it hard to understand why people are drawn to this. Yet our Western culture is drawn to it. There is even a Rock Group called "Nirvana". I wonder if they wore true religion jeans. Darkness is what I see.

Christians, on the other hand are drawn towards the Light. We value right speech, action, livelihood, mindfulness and all those things connected with the Buddhist's eightfold path but with greater depth which befits authorship by the Almighty. Christianity has the true and holy form of law. We have the Ten Commandments first written by the very finger of God. We have the Sermon on the Mount explaining the commandments as taught by the very Son of God. He died and rose again from the dead! This is why we pray to the "*Lord of all power and might, author and giver of all good things,*" as in our collect for today. For me, for all Christians, that gives this Law true nobility and holiness and truth. This is true doctrine.

Was there ever a man who became known as "Buddah"? Absolutely. And by all accounts he died. His effigy lies in repose, in a glass case in India. What authority is brought to his teaching? None. He is dead.

But Jesus lives! So His Word of Law and Gospel lives! Our God is the *author and giver of all good things*. "Your Law", sings the psalmist.

**“The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;
 the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
 the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
 the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
 the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
 the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.
 More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold;
 sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.
 Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them
 there is great reward.”**

Psalms 19:7-11 ESV

**Where does Our help come from. Our help comes from the Lord.
 The psalmist writing psalm 19 draws strength from “My Rock
 and My Redeemer”. So how does that help come? We pray in the
 collect, *graft into our hearts the love of Your name*. Christians
 know that this “grafting” happens as we are baptized into the
 Name of our Triune God.**

**At the Name, demons shutter and miracles happen. There is no
 other Name under heaven by which we might be saved and then
 live a new life. This “new life” is true religion in the context of the
 prayer. With the “love of the name” engrafted into our hearts, we
 can then pray for “an increase of true religion”.**

**It's not left to us on our own to define. We have all we need to
 know in the Ten Commandments as expounded in the Sermon on
 the Mount. Jesus gives a great summary of it saying.**

**"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all
 your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first
 commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your
 neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all**

the Law and the Prophets.""

Matthew 22:37-40 ESV

We are not left on our own strength to accomplish all this. For God hears our prayers and nourishes us. His Word is a living Word. His Baptism provides Living Waters. His Supper provides true nourishment. For this source alone come true fruits of faith and new life with unshakable joy, purpose and holiness which causes all to wonder at.

"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."

Romans 6

This is the "True Religion" we seek. Here is power over death. Here is strength to live a new life which we are born to! We shall walk as Jesus walked, in the body, with our perfected person and personality. Annihilation is not our goal. Simply the end of suffering is not our goal. But life. Made in and restored to the image of God, Our true Father. May we rejoice and be glad in it, amen.

Collecta Latina

Deus virtutum, cuius est totum quod est optimum, insere pectoribus nostris amorem tui nominis, et praesta nobis religionis augmentum, ut quae bona sunt notrias, ac pietatis studio quae sunt nutrita custodias. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus sancti Deus. Per omnia secula seculorum, Amen.

